

Amendments to the claims

Claim 1 (currently amended)

1. A cover for selectively covering allowing a drinking opening in beverage container assembly that has been manually filled with hot beverages by a server, where the beverage container assembly comprises a cup and a lid, where the lid defines an upper wall extending around a perimeter of the lid, a recessed portion arranged radially inwardly from the upper wall, and the drinking opening, is where the drinking opening is formed in an the upper wall adjacent to the recessed portion of the raised portion of the lid, the cover comprising:

a substantially planar cover member comprising first and second layers and defining a cover portion, a surrounding cover portion, a tab portion, and a perimeter edge; wherein

an outer edge portion of the perimeter edge opposes an inward edge portion of the perimeter edge;

the first layer is a structural layer having flexural characteristics that allow the cover member to be transported by engaging opposing portions applying opposing forces to the outward and inward portions of the perimeter edge of the cover member without substantially deforming the cover member from a substantially planar configuration;

the second layer defines an-a pressure sensitive adhesive surface adapted to detachably attach the cover member to the lid upon deliberate application of manual force on the cover member; whereby

the cover member is attached to the container assembly in a cover mode by engaging the opposing edge applying a manual pinching force between the outer edge and inward edge portions of the perimeter edge of the cover member to lift the cover member and bringing bring the surrounding cover portion of the cover member into contact with the upper wall of the raised portion of the lid such that the adhesive surface on the surrounding cover portion of the cover member adheres to the lid, where

the surrounding cover portion extends completely around the drinking opening,
the cover portion extends over the drinking opening, and
at least a portion of the tab portion of the cover member extends radially
outwardly into free space from the ~~raised portion~~upper wall of the lid; and
the cover is detached from the container assembly by applying deliberate manual force to the tab portion of the cover member that extends into free space to overcome the adhesion of the second layer of the cover member to the lid.

Claim 2 (original)

2. A cover as recited in claim 1, in which the flexural characteristics of the first layer of the cover member include a deflection value of substantially between 0.0 and 1.2 inches.

Claim 3 (original)

3. A cover as recited in claim 1, in which the flexural characteristics of the first layer of the cover member include a deflection value of substantially between 0.2 and 0.8 inches.

Claim 4 (original)

4. A cover as recited in claim 1, in which:
the surrounding cover portion of the cover member comprises first, second, third, and fourth portions;
the first and second portions are arranged on opposing sides of the cover portion;
the third and fourth portions are arranged on opposing sides of the cover portion;
the first and second portions of the surrounding cover portion extend from the covering portion a first distance;

the third and fourth portions of the surrounding cover portion extend from the covering portion a second distance; and
the first distance is substantially less than the second distance.

Claim 5 (currently amended)

5. A cover as recited in claim 1, in which the lid of the container assembly further defines a positioning surface, wherein:

the perimeter edge of the cover member defines a ~~first~~the inward edge portion;
the ~~first~~inward edge portion is arranged adjacent to the positioning surface to facilitate alignment of the covering portion of the cover member with the drinking opening.

Claim 6 (currently amended)

6. A cover as recited in claim 1, in which the lid of the container assembly further defines a positioning surface, wherein:

the perimeter edge of the cover member defines a ~~first~~the inward edge portion;
the ~~first~~inward edge portion is contoured to follow the positioning surface to facilitate alignment of the covering portion of the cover member with the drinking opening.

Claim 7 (currently amended)

7. A cover as recited in claim 1, in which:

~~the perimeter edge of the cover member defines first and second portions arranged on opposing sides of the cover portion;~~
~~the first~~inward edge portion of the perimeter edge extends from the covering portion a first distance;
~~the second~~outer edge portion of the perimeter edge extends from the covering portion a second distance; and
the first distance is substantially less than the second distance.

Claim 8 (currently amended)

8. A cover as recited in claim 7, in which the first inward edge portion is contoured to facilitate alignment of the covering portion of the cover member with the drinking opening.

Claim 9 (currently amended)

9. A cover as recited in claim 7, in which the second outer edge portion is defined by the tab portion of the cover member.

Claim 10 (currently amended)

10. A cover as recited in claim 1, in which the cover member is attached to the container assembly in a storage mode by engaging the opposing edge portions of the cover member and bringing the cover portion and the surrounding cover portion of the cover member into contact with the upper wall ~~of the raised portion~~ of the lid such that the adhesive surface on the surrounding cover portion of the cover member adheres to the lid, where:

the cover portion and the surrounding cover portion are spaced from the drinking opening, and

at least a portion of the tab portion of the cover member extends into free space from the ~~raised portion~~upper wall of the lid.

Claim 11 (currently amended)

11. A method of serving a beverage comprising the steps of:

providing a beverage container assembly comprises a cup and a lid, where the lid defines a drinking opening and comprises a raised portion comprising an upper wall, and an alignment wall, and defining a drinking opening a recessed portion, where drinking opening is formed in the upper wall and the recessed portion is adjacent to the drinking opening;

filling the beverage container assembly with a hot beverage;

providing a substantially planar cover member comprising first and second layers and defining a cover portion, a surrounding cover portion, a tab portion, and a perimeter edge, where

the perimeter edge defines an outer edge portion and an inward edge portion, where outer edge portion opposes the inward edge portion;
the first layer is a structural layer having flexural characteristics that allow the cover member to be transported by engaging opposing portionsthe outer and inward edge portions of the perimeter edge of the cover member without substantially deforming the cover member from a substantially planar configuration;

the second layer defines an-a pressure sensitive adhesive surface adapted to detachably attach the cover member to the lid upon application of deliberate manual force on the cover member;
whereby

attaching the cover member to the container assembly in a cover mode by engaging the opposing edge portions of the cover member and bringing applying manual pinching forces to the outer edge and inward edge portions the surrounding cover portion of to lift the cover member and bring the cover member into contact with the upper wall of the raised portion of the lid such that

the adhesive surface on the surrounding cover portion of the cover member adheres the cover member to the lid,
the surrounding cover portion extends completely around the drinking opening,

the cover portion extends over the drinking opening, and at least a portion of the tab portion of the cover member extends radially outwardly into free space from the raised portionupper wall of the lid; and

applying deliberate manual force to the tab portion of the cover member that extends into free space to overcome the adhesion of the second layer of the cover member to the lid and thereby detach the cover from the container assembly to allow the beverage to be drunk through the drinking opening.

Claim 12 (currently amended)

12. A method as recited in claim 11, in which:
~~the step of providing the cover member further comprises the step of forming a first edge portion of the perimeter edge; and~~
the step of attaching the cover member to the lid further comprises the step of arranging the first inward edge portion adjacent to the positioning surface to facilitate alignment of the covering portion of the cover member with the drinking opening.

Claim 13 (currently amended)

13. A method as recited in claim 11, in which:
~~the step of providing the cover member further comprises the step of forming a first edge portion of the perimeter edge; and~~
the step of attaching the cover member to the lid further comprises the step of contouring the first inward edge portion to follow the positioning surface to facilitate alignment of the covering portion of the cover member with the drinking opening.

Claim 14 (currently amended)

14. A method as recited in claim 11, further comprising the step of attaching the cover member to the container assembly in a storage mode by engagin engaging the opposing outer and inward edge portions of the cover member and bringing the cover portion and the surrounding cover portion of the cover member into contact with the upper wall of the raised portion of the lid such that the adhesive surface on the surrounding cover portion of the cover member adheres to the lid such that:
the cover portion and the surrounding cover portion are spaced from the drinking opening, and
at least a portion of the tab portion of the cover member extends radially outwardly into free space from the raised portion of the lid.

Claim 15 (original)

15. A method as recited in claim 14, further comprising the step of re-attaching the cover member to the container assembly in the cover mode.

Claim 16 (original)

16. A method as recited in claim 11, in which the step of providing the cover member further comprises the steps of:

providing a substrate material; and

arranging a plurality of cover members on the substrate material; and

removing one of the cover members from the substrate material.

Claim 17 (currently amended)

17. ~~A cover piece particularly adapted for use with a drinking container, to cover an opening of the drinking container by which a person can drink from the container assembly for hand poured hot beverages comprising:~~

~~, where said a drinking container has having a lower end portion and an upper end portion, and~~

~~which comprises a lid comprising an upper cover portion, said the upper cover portion having a central cover portion and a perimeter portion located radially outwardly from said the central cover portion, said the perimeter portion having a perimeter opening portion having defining the opening by which the person can drink from the container, the central cover portion defining a recessed portion adjacent to the opening, and the said perimeter opening portion comprising radially inward and radially outward wall portions, each having a substantial vertical alignment component, said the opening being positioned between said the radially inward and outward wall portions, said the perimeter opening portion further comprising an adjacent surrounding surface region adjacent to and extending around said the opening and comprising radially inward and outward adjacent surrounding surface regions that are radially inward and outward of said the opening, and lateral adjacent surrounding surface~~

region portions located laterally of said the opening, said cover piece comprising; and
a cover piece comprising
a cover section comprising a covering portion and a surrounding cover portion extending around the covering portion, said the cover piece being configured so that, in a covering position, covering said opening, where said the covering portion is located over said the opening and said the surrounding cover portion is located over said the adjacent surrounding surface region, said the cover piece having a lower surface pressure sensitive adhesive layer at least at said the surrounding cover portion; and
a tab section being arranged to extend outwardly from said the cover section so that, with the cover piece in the covering position, said the tab section is positioned to be manually grasped by a person; wherein
said the cover piece being characterized in having has a flexural stiffness where the deflection value thereof is less than 1.2 inches and yet is sufficiently stiff so that the cover piece is able to be held in a substantially planar configuration by opposite edge portions between a person's thumb and finger and placed over said the opening while being held between the thumb and the finger;
said cover piece being further characterized in that in its covering position, the cover piece has radially inward and outward surrounding cover portions located, respectively, radially inwardly and outwardly of said the opening, and lateral surrounding cover portions extending laterally along said the perimeter opening portion, said the cover section being arranged so that, with the cover piece in the covering position, the lateral portions of the surrounding cover portion extend from the covering portion a substantially greater distance than the distance which either of said the radially inward and outward surrounding surface portions extend from the opening, where portions of the pressure sensitive adhesive layer in contact with the

perimeter portion of the lid detachably attach the cover piece onto the lid over the opening formed therein; and
said cover piece being also characterized in that said the tab section extends radially outwardly from the radially outward surrounding portion of said the cover piece, so that with the cover piece in its covering position, the tab section extends beyond said the outward wall portion, and said the radially inward cover portion has a radially inward edge which, with the cover piece in the covering position, is closely adjacent to an upper edge of said the radially inward wall portion, whereby said the cover piece can be located relative to said the opening by positioning said the radially inward edge of the inward cover portion adjacent to the upper edge of the radially inward wall portion.

Claim 18 (currently amended)

18. A cover piece particularly adapted for use with a drinking container assembly for hand poured hot beverages, to cover an opening of the drinking container by which a person can drink from the container assembly, where said the container assembly has a container and an upper cover portion, the container having a lower end portion and an upper end portion, which comprises an upper cover portion, said the upper cover portion having a central cover portion and a perimeter portion located radially outwardly from said the central cover portion, said the perimeter portion having a perimeter opening portion having defining the opening by which the person can drink from the container, said the perimeter opening portion comprising radially inward and radially outward wall portions, each having a substantial vertical alignment component, where a radially inward edge of the radially inward wall portion has a substantially straight-line configuration, with at most a moderate curve, and said the opening being positioned between said the radially inward and outward wall portions, said the perimeter opening portion further comprising an adjacent surrounding surface region adjacent to and extending around said the opening and comprising radially inward and outward adjacent surrounding surface regions that are radially inward and outward of said the

opening, and lateral adjacent surrounding surface region portions located laterally of
saidthe opening, saidthe cover piece comprising:

a cover section comprising a covering portion and a surrounding cover portion extending around the covering portion, saidthe cover piece being configured so that in a covering position covering saidthe opening, saidthe covering portion is located over saidthe opening and saidthe surrounding cover portion is located over saidthe adjacent surrounding surface region, saidthe cover piece having a lower surface pressure sensitive adhesive layer at least at saidthe surrounding cover portion;

a tab section being arranged to extend radially outwardly from saidthe cover section so that with the cover piece in the covering position saidthe tab section is positioned to be manually grasped by a person;

saidthe cover piece being characterized in having a flexural stiffness where the deflection value thereof is less than 1.2 inches and yet is sufficiently stiff so that the cover piece is able to be held in a substantially planar configuration by opposite edge portions between a person's thumb and finger and placed over saidthe opening while being held between the thumb and the finger;

saidthe cover piece being arranged so that a radially inward edge of the radially inward wall portion has a substantially straight line configuration, with at most a moderate curve, and a radially inward edge of the radially inward cover portion has an alignment closely aligned therewithwith the radially inward edge of the radially inward wall portion, saidthe surrounding cover portion comprising a radially inward cover portion and a radially outward cover portion and oppositely positioned lateral cover portions, saidthe lateral cover portions of saidthe surrounding cover portion extending from the covering portion a substantially greater distance than a distance which saidthe inner and outer cover portions extend from saidthe covering portion; and

the application of deliberate manual force on the cover piece causes the pressure sensitive adhesive to detachably attach the cover piece to the lid over the opening.

Claim 19 (currently amended)

19. The cover piece as recited in claim 18, wherein saidthe cover piece has a radial axis which extends radially through saidthe cover piece when the cover piece is in its covering position, and a perimeter axis perpendicular to the radial axis, saidthe covering portion having a lateral dimension through saidthe lateral cover portions which is substantially greater than a radial dimension extending between saidthe radially inward and radially outward cover portions, and saidthe cover piece is particularly adapted to cover an opening having a circumferential alignment dimension substantially greater than a radial with dimension thereof.

Claim 20 (currently amended)

20. The cover piece as recited in claim 19, wherein saidthe tab section is positioned, with the cover piece in its covering position, to extend radially outwardly from a center location relative to saidthe perimeter axis, saidthe tab section having a radially outward edge portion which is generally centered along saidthe radial axis, whereby saidthe cover piece can be conveniently grasped and maneuvered by grasping the radially outward tab edge portion and the radially inward edge of the radially inward cover portion between a person's thumb and finger, and the cover piece can be properly aligned by the person tactile engagement with the radially inward edge of the radially inward wall portion.